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QUALITY DAIRY PRODUCTS---

Manufactured under USDA's
grading and quality control service

Strict quality control measures are needed -- from the time that milk is produced, to the time the finished dairy products reach market outlets -- to give discriminating consumers the quality they want in dairy products.

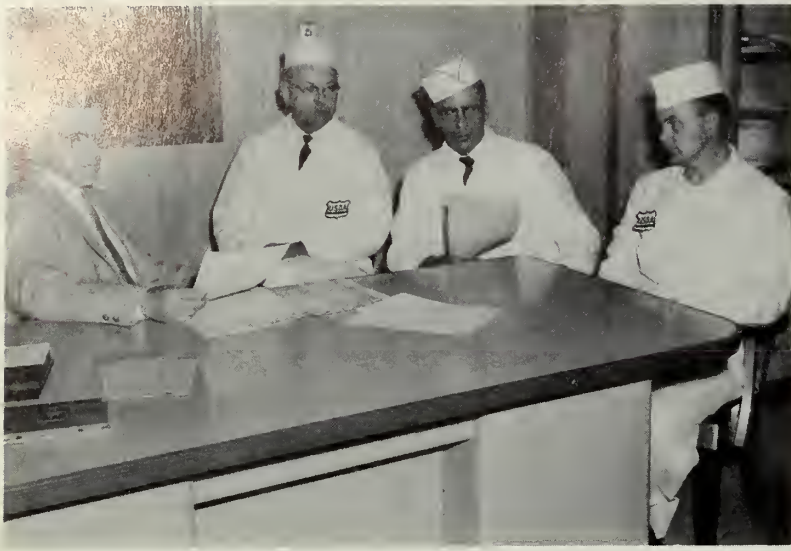
A grading and quality control service, which USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service makes available to processors of dairy products, helps them in their efforts to manufacture products of the highest possible quality.

The service employs an impartial, uniform system of evaluating the quality of dairy products. Used nationwide, this system is based on established, well recognized U. S. standards for grades and product quality specifications.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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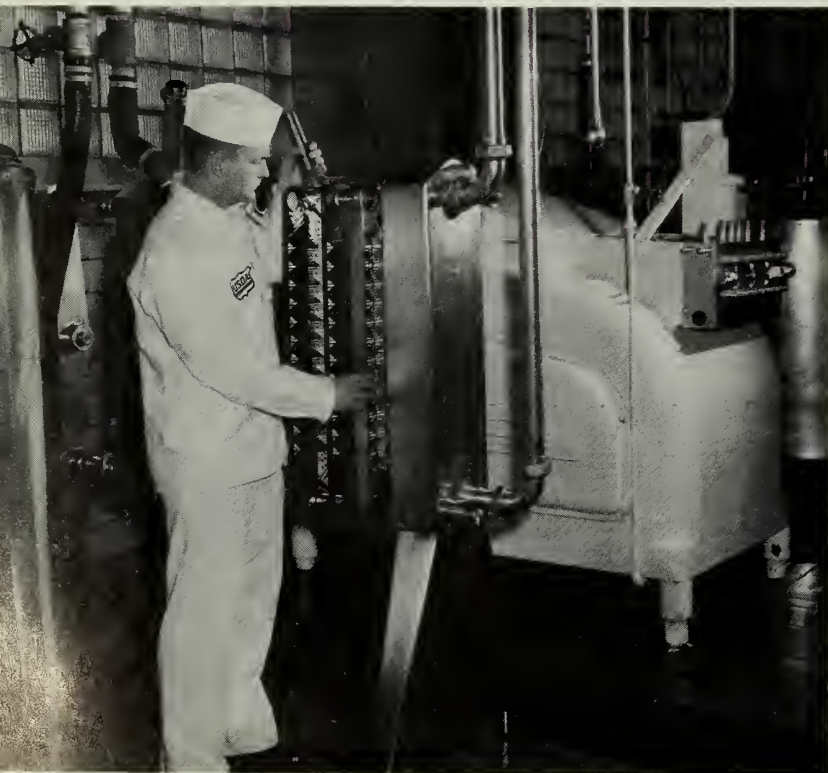
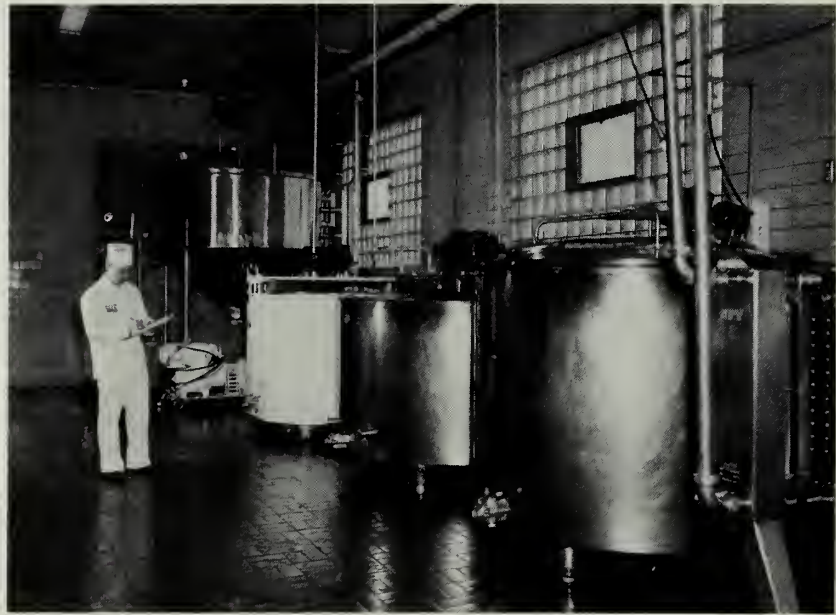
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A dairy products manufacturer interested in the grading and quality control service applies to the AMS Dairy Division's Inspection and Grading Branch. Inspection and grading specialists then meet with plant management and make an inspection and appraisal of the plant's facilities, equipment, practices of maintaining sanitation, and quality of the raw milk supply. (N-49406)

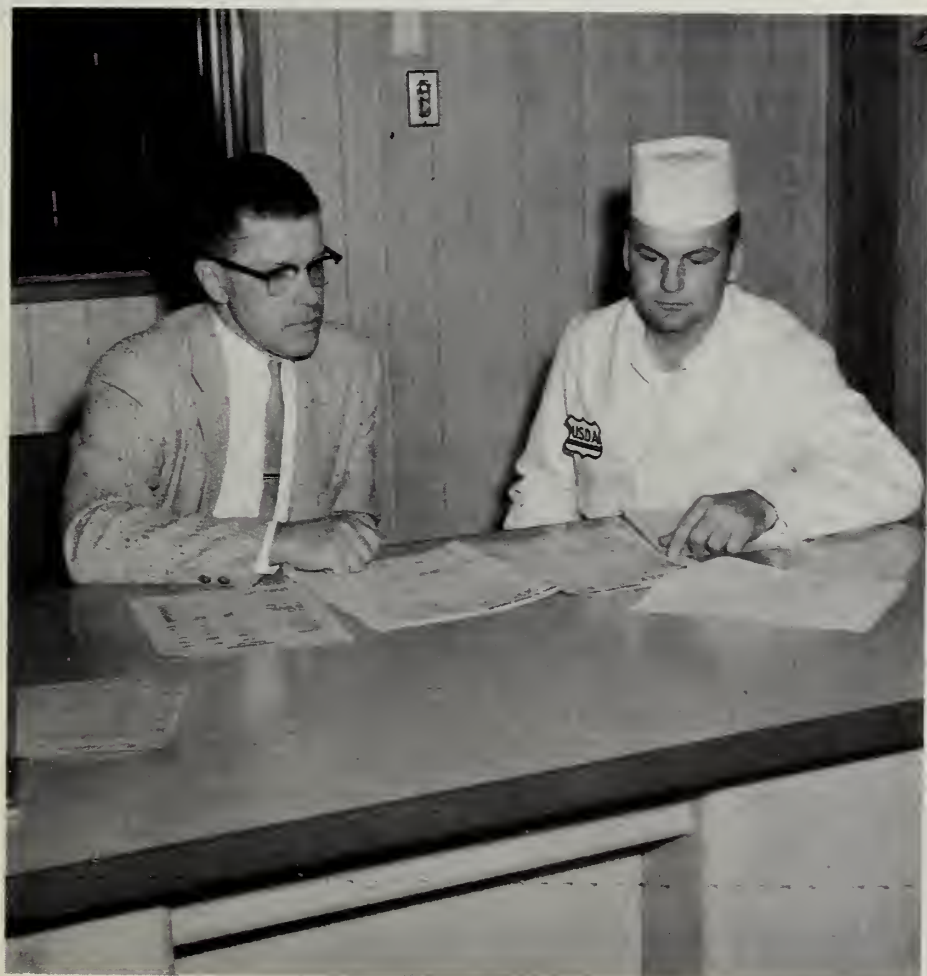
Dairy products inspector makes inspection of sour cream vats and surrounding area for sanitation, condition of equipment, and general orderliness, recording data on a survey report to management. This is done routinely by USDA inspector assigned to a plant under the grading and quality control service. (N-49421)



Inspector carefully examines pasteurizing equipment for sanitation, as part of dairy plant inspection and appraisal. (N-49419)



Dairy plant inspection and appraisal may involve a sanitation check on package-filling equipment, as this inspector is making. (N-49411)

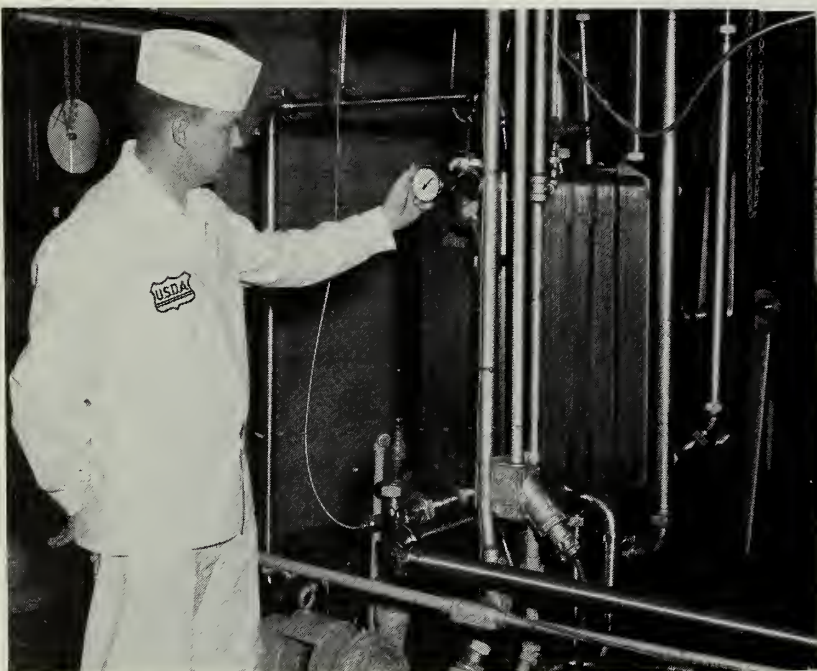


Plant superintendent (left) listens as inspector explains data on plant sanitation and manufacturing procedures, which he has recorded in periodic inspection of plant. Inspector's recommendations help assure that the plant's products will be of uniform high quality, will meet specific grade or contract requirements, and will have good keeping quality. (N-49407)



Dairy products inspector, assigned full time to a plant using the "resident" grading and quality control service, draws sample of milk for bacteriological testing from 10-gallon cans entering the plant. Cans, once emptied, are washed and returned, clean and dry, to producers. (N-49418)

Periodically, samples of milk entering the plant are analyzed for quality characteristics. This inspector, working in a laboratory which the plant provides for quality control testing, is preparing samples for bacteriological plate tests. (N-49403)



Inspector check temperature of milk in pasteurizer, prior to its use in manufacture of dairy foods. Inspector is trained to assist plant management in correcting any deficiencies. (N-49409)

Dairy products inspector assigned to the plant under the grading and quality control service checks the product throughout its manufacture and recommends improved processing procedures. Here, inspector observes plant employee pouring "starter," a specially selected bacterial culture, into vat of milk during early stage of cottage cheese manufacture. (N-49400)



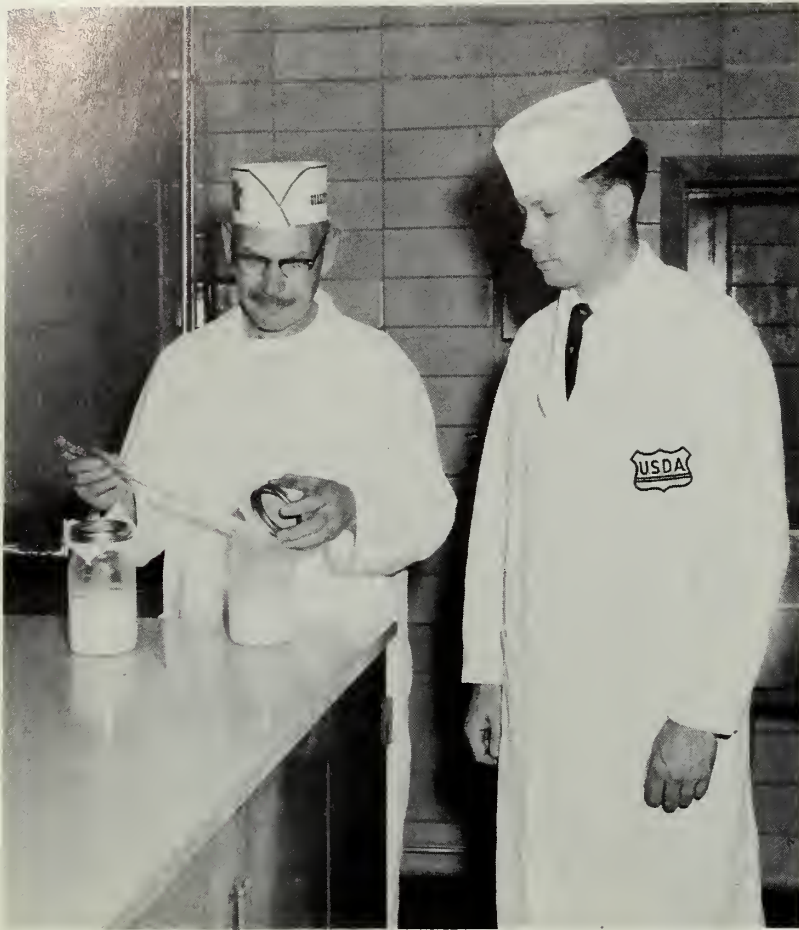
Plant employee "ditches" the cottage cheese curd, pushing it aside to allow the whey to drain. (N-49413)



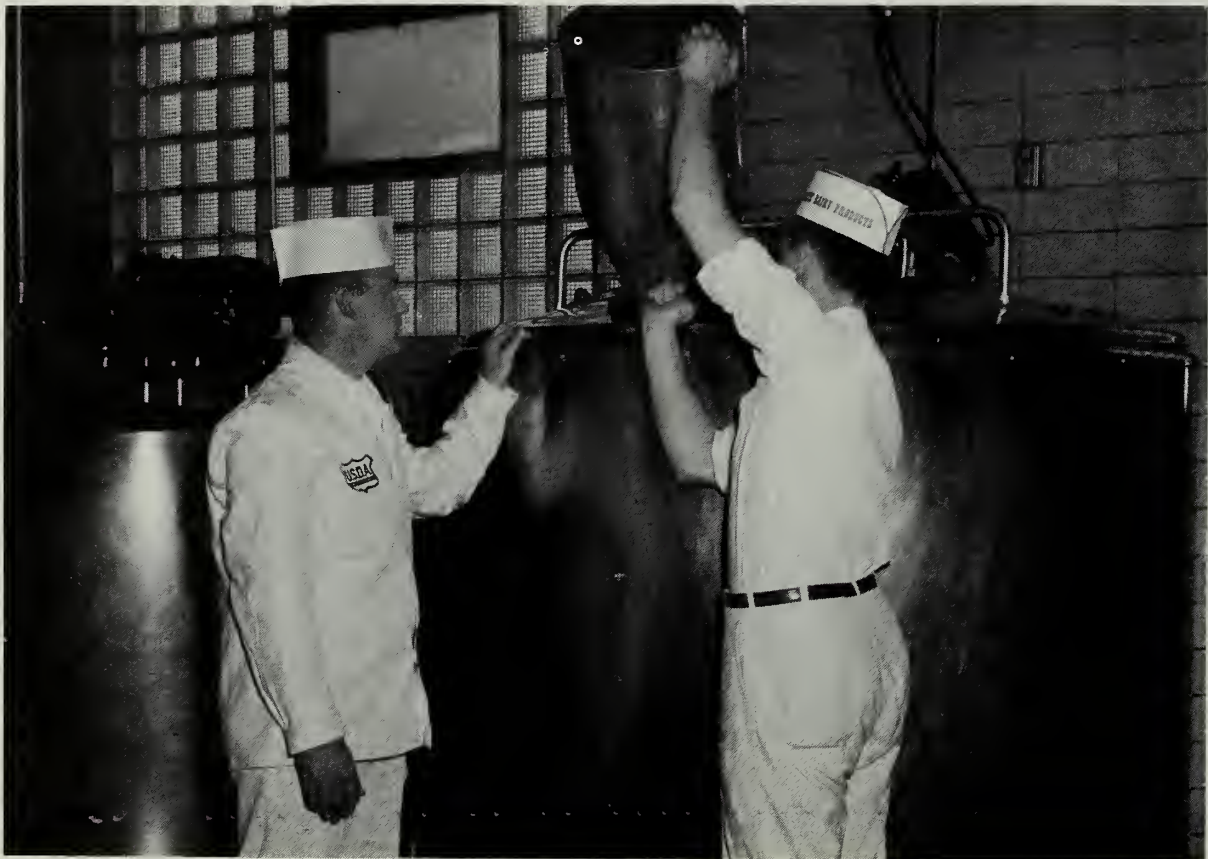
Vats of milk, with starter added, are covered while cottage cheese curd forms. (N-49410)



Plant employee pours fresh sweet cream into vat of cottage cheese curd. Mechanical agitator uniformly mixes the cream and curd. (N-49415)



Dairy products inspector recommends proper technique in preparing "starter" cultures for use in manufacture of cottage cheese and sour cream. Laboratory employee of dairy manufacturing plant transfers "mother" culture to flask of sterilized milk in making a new batch of starter. To avoid contamination, he uses a sterile pipette. (N-49408)

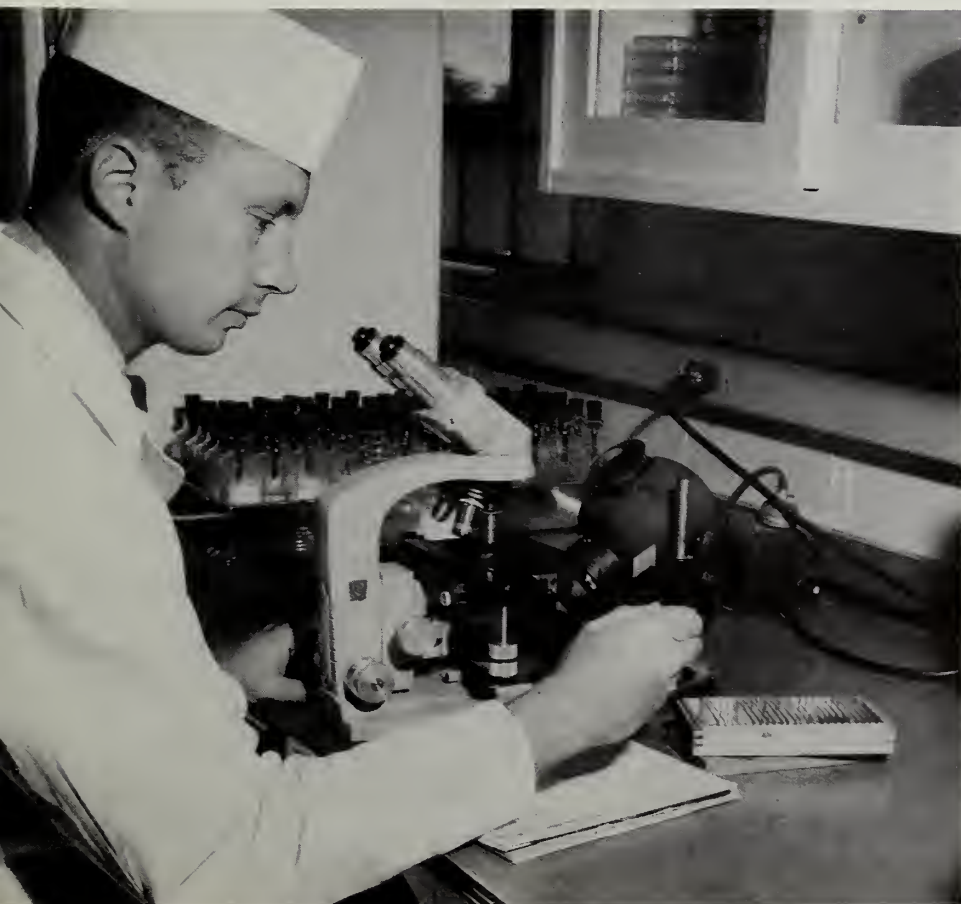


Inspector observes plant employee adding "starter" culture to vat of sweet cream as step in manufacture of cultured sour cream. The specially selected bacterial culture produces the distinct and pleasing flavor and aroma of sour cream. (N-49420)

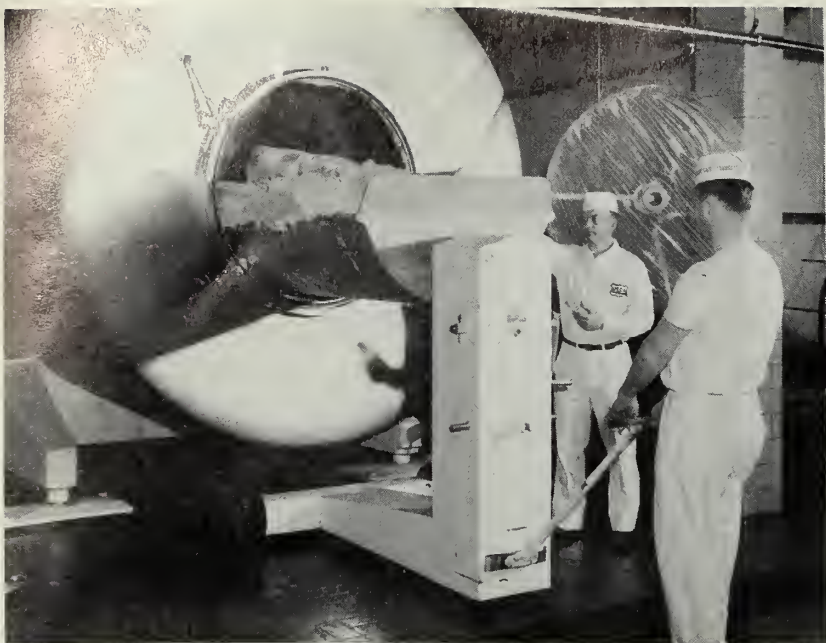
Laboratory technicians of manufacturing plant (at right in photo), working under supervision of USDA dairy inspection personnel, perform quality control tests on cottage cheese, sour cream, butter, nonfat dry milk, and other products manufactured under USDA's grading and quality control service. (N-49422)



Assignment of U. S. grade on non-fat dry milk requires seven different laboratory tests, including chemical and bacteriological analyses, as well as a flavor test. Dairy products inspector, working in the plant laboratory, weighs a sample of dry milk as the first step in determining the grade. (N-49402)

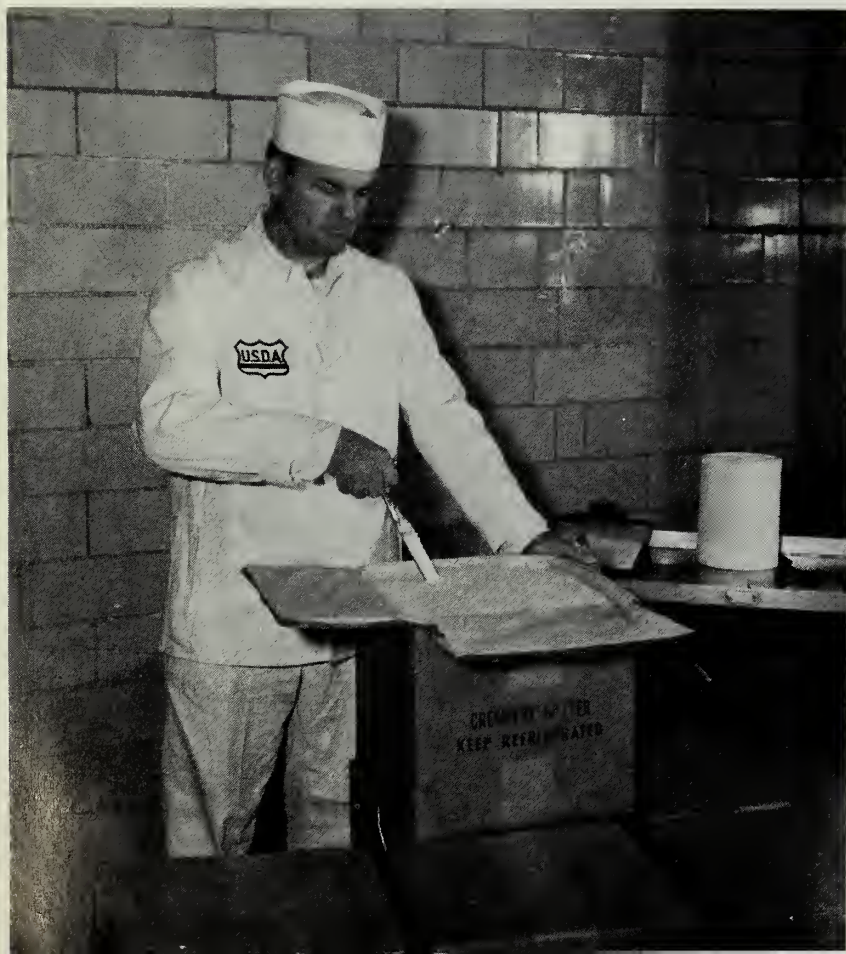
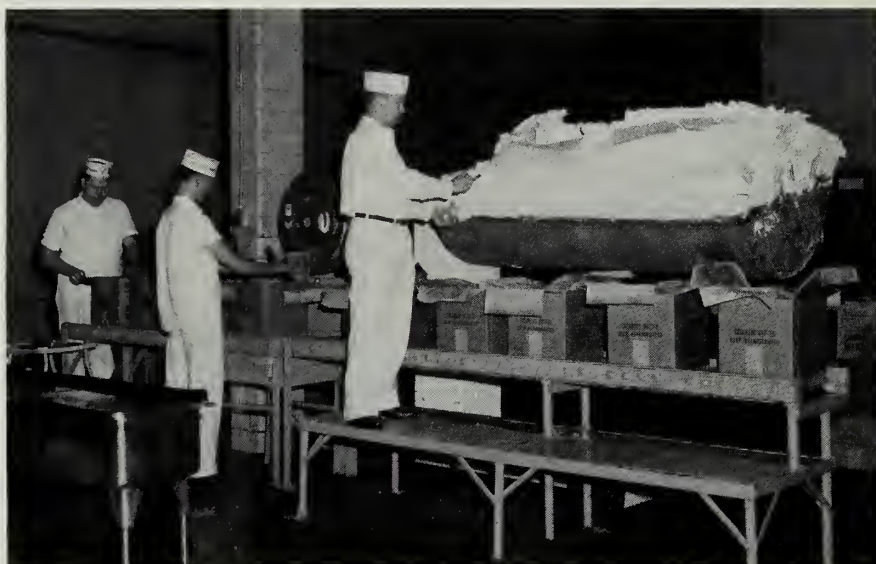


Inspector examines a sample of dry milk under the microscope as one of the test requirements for determining the grade. (N-42868)



Out of the churn comes 4,000 pounds of fresh butter, made from 8,000 pounds of cream. Inspector draws sample for laboratory analysis. (N-49389)

Dairy products inspector draws sample of butter for tests on keeping quality and composition. Plant employees (left) are packing and weighing butter into bulk containers. (N-49390)



Using a trier, inspector draws sample of butter for grading. Grading is done on the basis of standards set by the Dairy Division of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service. (N-49394)

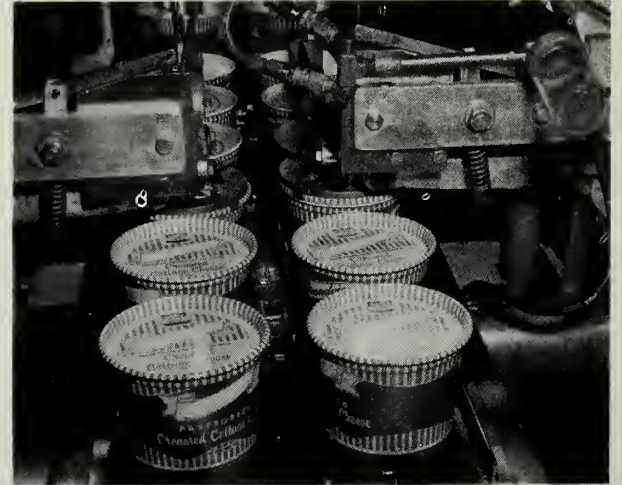
In grading butter, flavor -- determined by taste and aroma -- is given greatest consideration. Inspector also considers body and texture, as well as color, in determining the grade of butter. Top quality butter merits the USDA AA grade. (N-49399)



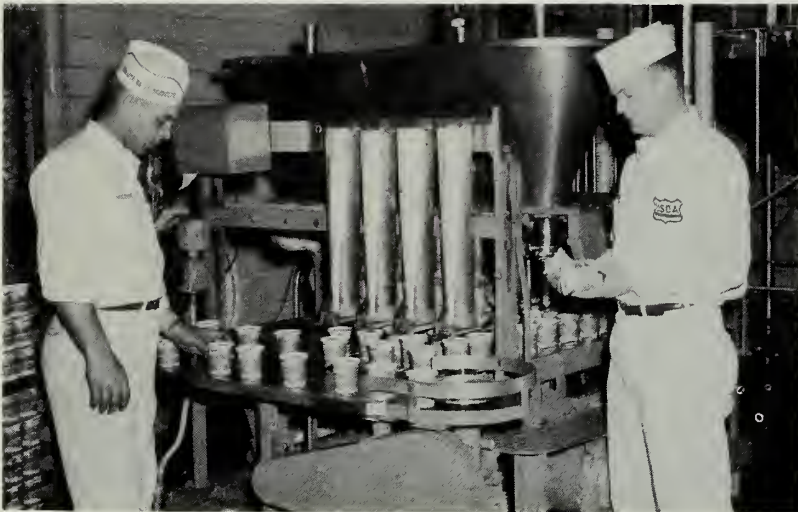
Inspector places samples of butter into sterile jars which will be placed in laboratory incubators for tests on keeping quality. Good test results mean added assurance that the butter will maintain its fine flavor until used by the consumer. (N-49396)



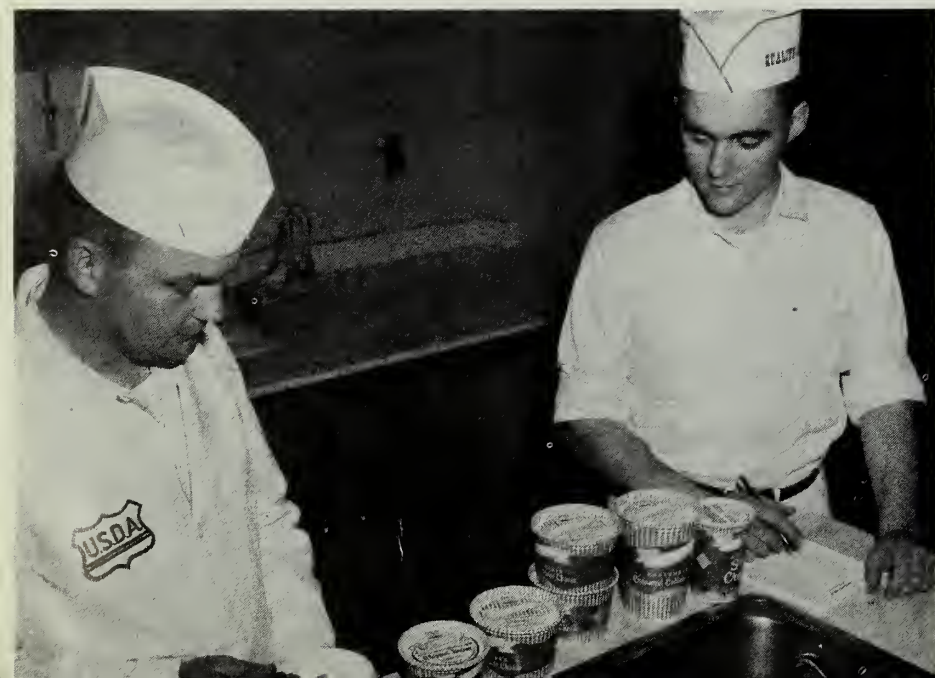
Cartons of cottage cheese emerge from packaging machine. Cartons bear the USDA Quality Approved shield. (N-49423)



Inspector examines packaging of cultured sour cream. Product is being packaged into cartons bearing the USDA Quality Approved shield. (N-49391)



Inspector tastes and examines samples of packaged cottage cheese, cultured sour cream, and whipped butter as part of laboratory testing conducted under the grading and quality control service. Plant employee records test data. (N-49405)





These grade and quality shields may appear on consumer packages of dairy products manufactured under the grading and quality control service. The U. S. Grade AA shield, which appears on packages of butter, denotes the top level of quality, as does the U. S. Extra Grade shield on packages of both instant and regular nonfat dry milk. The USDA Quality Approved shield on consumer packages of cottage cheese, process cheese, cultured sour cream, and cultured buttermilk means these products were manufactured and packaged under USDA's grading and quality control service and approved by USDA dairy products inspectors as being of finest quality. (BN-6149)

Strict quality control during manufacture -- through the grading and quality control service -- means quality dairy products in the dairy case. The food shopper recognizes the USDA shield on the package as her assurance of uniform top quality. (N-51197)



For more information about USDA's grading and quality control service, write to:

Inspection and Grading Branch
Dairy Division, AMS
U. S. Department of Agriculture
Federal Center Building
Hyattsville, Maryland 20781

...or to the Area Supervisor of any of the following Dairy Inspection and Grading offices:

- 414 Federal Building
110 South Fourth Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55401
- Room 1030
536 South Clark Street
Chicago, Illinois 60605
- Room 1011
346 Broadway
New York, New York 10013
- 711 U. S. Appraisers Building
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